

MAURICE K. SIMONS.

[To accompany Bill H. R. No. 639.]

APRIL 13, 1860.

Mr. BUFFINTON, from the Committee on Military Affairs, made the following

REPORT.

*The Committee on Military Affairs, to whom was referred the petition of Maurice K. Simons, of Jackson county, Texas, for reimbursement of expenses incurred in consequence of a wound received in the late war with Mexico, and for a horse killed in the service, report:*

That the petitioner alleges that he was engaged in the late war with Mexico as a beef contractor, and while so engaged he volunteered to perform a most hazardous and arduous service to the army under the command of General Taylor, at Saltillo, in bearing a despatch to General Marshall, then at Reconada, some thirty-five miles distant, while General Meñon, with a body of 1,500 Mexican cavalry, was occupying a position between them. This hazardous service was successfully performed, to the entire satisfaction of General Taylor, by the petitioner and a companion, who volunteered to perform the service gratuitously, although a large reward had been offered for volunteers to undertake it, without success.

The petitioner also alleges that on the 27th day of April, 1847, while on his way to Ceralvo for the purpose of obtaining fresh beef for the troops, he was waylaid and shot by the Mexican guerrillas, and so severely wounded that he fell from his horse, and, while lying on the ground, maintained a desperate fight with said band of guerillas, one of whom he shot through the heart and killed; that at the time of said attack he was riding a very valuable horse, for which he had been offered the sum of three hundred dollars, and which was killed by the guerillas. In consequence of the wound received as aforesaid he lay for several months at Ceralvo, and had to send to Monterey for a surgeon to attend him, and to submit to the amputation of his left leg at the hip joint. He alleges that the direct expense of his long confinement and sickness resulting from said wound was more than one thousand dollars, all which he paid out of his own funds. He is totally incapacitated for labor by his said wound, and has heretofore been allowed a pension of eight dollars per month, by virtue of an act of Congress. He asks remuneration for the expenses incurred in con-

sequence of said wound, and compensation for the horse killed as aforesaid.

Major A. B. Eaton, who was chief commissary of subsistence to the army under the command of General Taylor in Mexico, and under whom the petitioner was employed in obtaining beef for the army as aforesaid, in a certificate dated on the 5th of January, 1848, among other things, says:

"That said Simons, in company with Trahan, was, on the 27th day of April, 1847, proceeding from Monterey to Ceralvo, under the escort and protection of some United States troops, for the purpose of entering upon his duties at Ceralvo; and that, when near the place called Papagallos, he was shot in the thigh by a Mexican ranchero concealed by the chaparral, and though badly wounded—his thigh being broken close to his hip joint, and falling from his horse, and for the moment alone—he killed the ranchero from his fallen position, and defended himself in that condition until rescued by some of the party."

The meritorious services of the petitioner are set forth in a letter addressed by General Taylor to his father, of which the following is a copy:

"BATON ROUGE, LA., *January 27, 1848.*

"SIR: Your communication of the 8th instant, in relation to the case of your son, Maurice K. Simons, has come duly to hand. As he was not in the military service at the time of his unfortunate wound, he will be unable, in my opinion, to obtain any assistance from the government under the pension laws now in existence, and he will therefore be compelled to seek relief at the hands of Congress. With a view to this, it affords me great pleasure to place at your disposal my willing testimony in favor of such relief.

"While the army of occupation was lying at Agua Nueva, and but a few weeks before the battle of Buena Vista, we were mainly dependent upon the indefatigable exertions of your son and his companion, Mr. Trahan, for the fresh beef portion of our rations.

"The rapid approach of the Mexican army from the direction of San Luis had at that time entirely estranged the neighboring Mexicans from us, under the belief that our overthrow and expulsion from the country were at hand. They not only ceased to bring the important article of food to our camp, but, in their hostility, had driven their cattle from our immediate vicinity. Notwithstanding that the collection of cattle was thus rendered a matter of great labor and imminent risk, your son and his companion succeeded in supplying us with this essential part of the ration until some time after the battle of Buena Vista; and I feel safe in saying that much of our comfort, if not of our efficiency, was due to their unsparing exertions during that critical period.

"Again, on my return to Saltillo, on the night of the 22d of February, I deemed it to be of the last importance to communicate during the night an order to Brigadier General Marshall, then at Reconada, some 35 miles distant, to join me with the artillery under his command, under cover of the ensuing night. It was known to us at that

time that General Meñon, with a body of 1,500 Mexican cavalry, was occupying a position between us, and that therefore there was an extreme probability of the messengers falling into his hands, and of their placing in his possession information of the highest importance.

"The difficult service of carrying my despatch to General Marshall was intrusted to the activity, boldness, and intelligence of your son and Mr. Trahan, who, regardless of the imminent danger attending it, gallantly volunteered for the occasion. The duty, I am happy to say, was performed with entire success, and of itself justly entitles your son, in my opinion, to the early and liberal consideration of Congress.

"With the sincere hope that his petition may meet with this success,

"I remain, sir, with great respect, your obedient servant,

"Z. TAYLOR,

"Major General, U. S. Army.

"THOMAS SIMONS, *Texana, Texas.*"

The committee recommend an allowance to the petitioner of fifteen hundred dollars, and report a bill accordingly.

